

## Teachers and Paraprofessionals

**Teachers:** Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA), teachers of core academic subjects need to be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-06 school year. Highly qualified is another term for subject mastery. The provision ensures teachers know the subject area they are teaching. NCLBA permits a variety of ways for teachers to demonstrate subject mastery:

- Possess a major or minor in the subject area they teach; or
- Pass a State test in the subject area(s) in which they teach; or
- Demonstrate subject mastery via a uniform standard established by the State.

Teachers who participate in alternative certification programs are also considered highly qualified under the law.

**Paraprofessionals:** Aides who provide direct assistance in academic instruction must demonstrate, by January 2006, basic knowledge in reading, writing and math by possessing a high school diploma (or its equivalent) and completing:

- An associate's degree or higher; or
- 2 years of study at a college or university; or
- A local or State test of basic knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics; or
- A local test based on formal classroom observations.

Paraprofessionals not involved with instruction are not subject to this provision.

**Resources:** *Teacher funding will grow to \$48.6 million in 2004 – an increase of \$14 million or 40% over the old law. Tennessee will receive nearly \$257 million for teachers before the new teacher provisions go into full effect.*

## Assessments and Accountability

**Assessments:** Under NCLBA, all students will be tested in reading and math in grades 3-8 beginning in the 2005-06 school year. The tests will be aligned to State standards already in place. Each State may use local tests to meet the new requirements provided that the State can demonstrate that the use of local tests allows for uniform comparable measures of student performance.

- The NCLBA provision to administer tests goes into effect only if the federal government provides the money.

**Resources:** *Tennessee is already receiving \$7.4 million in new testing funds annually.*

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):** Under NCLBA, States establish the definition of AYP based on existing academic proficiency standards and ensure that every child reaches proficiency in reading and math within 12 years. All subgroups (including poor children and minority children) are expected to make AYP. If a school has not met AYP for a particular subgroup for 2 years in a row, the school is identified as “in need of improvement” – a status that triggers both additional funding and technical assistance to help the school address the needs of the struggling subgroup.

AYP does not apply if a subgroup at a school is so small that it cannot provide statistically reliable data or if the subgroup is so small that using AYP would reveal the identity of a child who is underperforming. For example, if the number of special education students at a school is particularly small, those students' progress will be evaluated using measures other than AYP.

Source: Senate Republican Conference,  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee,  
Department of Education

## Unprecedented Increase in Federal Funding



- Tennessee received \$316 million for NCLBA in formula funding in 2003. This is an overall increase of \$91 million over the old law – an increase of 40%.
- Title I (the largest NCLBA program) funding for Tennessee will grow to \$197 million in 2004 – an increase of \$56.4 million or 40% over the old law.
- Compared to the old law, Tennessee school districts with high concentrations of poverty received 30% to 40% increases in Title I.

## Reading First

Over the next six years, Tennessee will receive \$108 million under NCLBA to support reading instruction based on scientific research, early identification and help for reading difficulties, and high-quality professional development for teachers.

*“If ever there can be a cause worthy to be upheld by all toil or sacrifice that the human heart can endure, it is the cause of education.”*

— HORACE MANN,  
“THE FATHER OF AMERICAN EDUCATION”

## Flexibility and Rural Schools

NCLBA establishes new flexibility for federal funds Districts may transfer up to 50% of the funding they receive for Teachers, Technology, Innovative Programs, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools to any one of these programs or to Title I without prior State or Federal approval. In addition districts may transfer up to 100% of their funding among these programs in exchange for entering into certain performance agreements. Rural districts may consolidate as much as 100% of all the money under these programs for local priorities.

## Local Control

Under NCLBA, local school districts make the decisions on:

- Curriculum;
- How to fix a school that has failed to meet AYP and is identified as in need of improvement;
- How to transfer federal funds among programs to best meet local priorities;
- How to assess paraprofessionals; and
- How to use teacher funds on professional development, alternative certification, bonuses merit pay, differential pay, other incentives to recruit and retain teachers, and class-size reduction – unlike the old law which limited teacher funding to math and science professional development or class-size reduction.

For more information on NCLBA legislation, regulations and guidance, visit the U.S. Department of Education at:  
[www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html)

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## An Education Message from U.S. Senator Bill Frist:



# No Child Left Behind

*“We’re all working together to  
make sure no child in Tennessee  
is left behind.”*

– U.S. SENATOR BILL FRIST, M.D.

